

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

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R 301428Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6613

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

UNCLAS LAGOS 10038

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECIN, AORG

SUBJ: ECOWAS MINISTERIAL MEETING SET FOR JANUARY

1. OCT. 27 JOINT COMMUNIQUE AT CONCLUSION OF TOGOLESE PRESIDENT
EYADEMA'S SEVEN-DAY STATE VISIT TO NIGERIA (SEPTTEL) STATES
LIBERIA WILL HOST JAN. 27 TO 30, 1975 ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF
WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS) MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ORIGINALLY
SCHEDULED FOR NIAMEY MARCH 1974. IN COMMUNIQUE GOWON AND
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EYADEMA PLEDGE TO DO ALL IN THEIR POWER TO INSURE THAT THE

SUBSEQUENT CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF STATE OF THE PROPOSED FIFTEEN WEST AFRICAN MEMBER NATIONS TO BE HELD IN LAGOS TAKES PLACE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE PAIR GO ON TO EXPRESS THEIR HOPE THAT THE LAGOS CONFERENCE WILL LEAD TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMUNITY. SPEAKING WITH NEWSMEN IN LAGOS PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE EYADEMA QUOTED AS SAYING ECOWAS WILL BE FORMALLY ESTABLISHED AT LAGOS SUMMIT NEXT MAY.

2. WORKING LEVEL MEA SOURCE REFUSED TO CONFIRM MAY DATE FOR LAGOS MEETING, SAYING ONLY THAT TIMING WOULD DEPEND ON RESULTS OF JANUARY MEETING.

3. FYI: SINCE GROWING TENDENCY HERE IS TO REFER TO NIGERIA-TOGO PROPOSED WEST AFRICA GROUPING AS ECOWAS RATHER THAN WAEC POST WILL HENCEFORTH USE FORMER TERM. END FYI.

4. COMMENT: SCHEDULING OF MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE FOR JANUARY AND PLEDGE BY TWO HEADS OF STATE TO DO THEIR UTMOST TO BRING OFF SUMMIT MEETING SOON THEREAFTER IS OBVIOUS ATTEMPT TO GET BACK ON TRACK A PROJECT WHICH SOME OBSERVERS HAD ALREADY BEGUN TO WRITE OFF. WE ARE UNCERTAIN WHETHER NIGER BOWED OUT GRACEFULLY AS HOST OF MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OR DID SO UNDER PRESSURE. SIMILARLY UNCLEAR WHETHER SHIFTING VENUE OF MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE FROM CEA MEMBER NIGER TO NON-CEAO MEMBER WILL BE VIEWED AS SETBACK IN EFFORTS TO WIN OVER CEAO MEMBERS TO ECOWAS. CONTINUING STRONG NIGERIAN INTEREST IN FORMATION OF ECOWAS IS EVIDENCED BY PROMINENCE IT GIVEN IN COMMUNIQUE AND IN LOCAL PRESS REPORTING. RATHER THAN RISK SCARING OFF NERVOUS FRANCOPHONES, HOWEVER, FMG MAY CONTINUE LOW KEY APPROACH, DEFERRING TO TOGO AS CHIEF DRUM BEATER FOR PROPOSED ECONOMIC COMMUNITY.
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